



**For Immediate Release**  
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**Public Health Experts Warn Lack of Planning in Development Projects Increases Risk of  
Mosquito-borne disease threats**

*Project design and maintenance can reduce mosquito habitats and vector-borne disease transmission*

**SACRAMENTO, AUGUST 14, 2014** – According to the Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California (MVCAC), the state’s leading advocate for mosquito and vector control, new development projects that do not take into account vector breeding potential have created an increased threat to public health. Public health experts believe that much more can be done to prevent mosquitoes, which are responsible for an estimated 725,000 deaths worldwide each year. There are a number of factors that play a role in this devastating figure, however, urbanization itself has become a significant risk factor as populations rise and infrastructure designed to accommodate dense populations is built. Current California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statutes and Guidelines neglect to directly address vector and mosquito threats.

While many local governments have done a good job improvising from existing CEQA guidelines and other planning tools to begin to address this issue, a significant gap exists between state regulations and the resources that most local planning agencies need to address vector issues in the planning process. To address this concern, MVCAC has developed and widely distributed, “How Better Planning and Use of the California Environmental Quality Act Can Prevent Mosquitoes and Vector-Borne Disease,” a white paper that discusses the benefits for developers, natural resources and public health when adding vector control considerations to local government project planning and design.

Association member agencies across the state strongly believe that there needs to be an inclusion of mosquito and vector control considerations as a preventive planning measure in the local planning and entitlement process. Adding these public health vector control considerations would be a first step in ensuring that vector issues are appropriately addressed early in the project planning process in environmental documents.

Inclusion of proactive design and maintenance can dramatically reduce the risk of vector production and vector-borne disease transmission, improve water quality and habitat benefits, and result in more sustainable development in the long run.

Additionally, beyond the important benefit to public health, it also results in a substantial cost savings to taxpayers and reduces pesticide applications to the environment.

“It is our job to work with and collaborate with other state agencies to ensure that mosquito and vector control activities across the state are able to effectively safeguard public health while protecting the environment. MVCAC feels that taking these proactive measures will correct a pervasive planning oversight and better ensure protection of the environment and the public health for all citizens of California,” said Craig Downs, president of the Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California.

MVCAC’s White Paper presents a number of case studies that identify problems and recommended solutions specific to the local planning and CEQA review process and is intended to be a tool for local governments and other lead agencies to manage, analyze, and address the impacts of mosquito and vector breeding inherent in certain types of projects.

To view the entire White paper, “How Better Planning and Use of the California Environmental Quality Act Can Prevent Mosquitoes and Vector-Borne Disease” please visit: [MVCAC CEQA White Paper](#).

MVCAC represents more than 82 special districts which are responsible for mosquito and vector control, surveillance of West Nile virus and other vector-borne disease, as well as public education programs to help Californians protect themselves from disease. MVCAC works closely with local government, the University of California and the California Department of Health Services in its mission. MVCAC advocates safe, effective and environmentally friendly methods of mosquito and vector control.

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